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for the old look
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Arthur Fiedler
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Editor's Note:

It has been a pleasure to hear from so many readers in response to our June query: What size do you want the ARG to be?

From the mountain of letters received there could be only one conclusion. By about five to one, the mail has been running in favor of the traditional smaller format that was abandoned two years ago. We were not surprised at this, but we were quite surprised and delighted by the strength of your feelings.

Many of you took the opportunity to discuss other matters—the arrangement of reviews, the selection of articles, tape coverage, indices, and so forth. All your comments were duly noted, the gruff and the gracious alike.

For obvious reasons of space we cannot print the entire correspondence. We shall, however, take up the various subjects covered in due course. In the meantime, here is a sampling of extracts dealing with our format.

Our special thanks to those partisans of both the "old" and the "new" size who made it clear they would abide with us in any event. It made the decision easier.

—J. L.

FROM THE MAJORITY:

By all means, go back to the original format. The present one is undesirable because it is unhandy, unwieldy, and unattractive.

ADRIAN BUYSE
Elkins Park, Pa.

I believe I like the smaller magazine. I can file it and I throw the big one away.

W. A. ORMON
Columbia, Tenn.

By all means return to the old size. I used to bind my issues, but the magazines received through the mails during the past two years came in such bad condition that this is hardly possible.

GLENN A. HARDER
Milwaukee

I always felt the small size was best. It stores on the shelves easier and I think it would bind better. I would not quit taking it whatever its size, however.

JOHN M. ANDERSON
Alamosa, Calif.

Indeed, I agree that the *Guide* "hasn't been the same" since the size was changed. Because I am a typographer I felt I was unduly susceptible to such a reaction and am interested that others agree. Please go back to the small format.

DOROTHY ABBE
Hingham, Mass.

I cast my vote most emphatically for a return to the old size—it had so many advantages over the "floppy" *Guide* of today.

R. ERIC WARREN
Ames, Iowa

Enter my vote for a return to the handy and sturdy small size. Besides its sheer convenience, it came through the mails in better condition, and I thought the cover design you used in Volume 21 made

it a very attractive little publication . . . I am looking forward to receiving a small *American Record Guide* in September.

STEPHEN C. RUTH
Shaker Heights, Ohio

Though I haven't noticed any difference in the quality of your magazine, I much preferred the smaller size.

MRS. J. F. JOHNSTON, JR.
Grand Haven, Mich.

It was a most pleasant sight to see the little note in the June issue and to know that there was a chance of receiving future issues in the old size. Like many constant readers over the years, I am sure, I greeted the larger size with a groan but did not let you hear it. My affection for the *Guide* would continue whatever the format. But please let me make one non-musical noise against the present size and another very musical approval of the return to the old.

WALTER L. KOEHLER
Baltimore

Emphatically yes, go back to the small size. The *Guide* lately has been a miserable slithery thing which can't be put in handbag or pocket—and impossible therefore to have for easy reference. I have moaned and groaned ever since you made the change.

ELIZABETH PRECIOUS
Vancouver, B. C.

We are among your subscribers who prefer the smaller format, but if it is less costly to print in the "regular" magazine size we are not insistent about it. The important thing, after all, is the integrity of this remarkable publication.

ANNETTE and LOUIS KAUFMAN
Los Angeles

I think it is not too much to say that I have hardly read an issue since the size was enlarged, simply because the new format was no longer *gemütlich*. If my

daughter had not kept me waiting in the post office when this issue came in, I should, in fact, have missed your little note; the magazine has kept coming only because I entered a 3-year subscription just before the size was changed. Several letters on the subject were mentally composed at the time but they were not sent because I imagined I should only be thought an unprogressive curmudgeon (which, perhaps, I am). Now that I understand others have complained, I loudly join the chorus.

GEORGE L. PAYNE
Garrett Park, Md.

Please bring your most interesting journal back to its convenient former size.

BENGT VON HEIJNE
Stockholm, Sweden

I have never been pleased with the change to the larger sheet, and would be glad if you again used the smaller sheet . . . Of course, you must realize that only a very small percentage of the public will ever take the trouble to write a letter of this sort—they prefer to sit back and grumble.

CARL FILE
Port Huron, Mich.

Regarding your inquiry in the June issue, I much prefer the old format. The large one arrives with a crease that is impossible to remove and ugly when bound.

PAUL HUNN
Mexico, D.F.

I must vote with those who prefer the smaller format, perhaps for a rather trivial reason. The appearance of the larger magazine has been attractive, and I find no fault with it. I still prefer the smaller size, however, because I find your back issues (Continued on page 178)

Peter Hugh Reed, Founder and Editor Emeritus

James Lyons, Editor and Publisher

Reviewers

John W. Barker	C. J. Luten
Eugene Bruck	Todd S. Maynard
Shirley Fleming	David H. Miller
Edward Jablonski	Philip L. Miller
Alfred Kaine	Robert Reid
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Resurrection of an Era

The Vogue and the Mode

By JOHN W. BARKER

MUCH HAS been said of the "revolution" brought about by the long-playing record. Vast expansion of the catalogues has introduced us to forgotten works by famous composers, and names like Gesualdo, Cambini, Ives, Cimarosa, Nielsen, Galuppi, Berwald, and Durante have emerged from their textbook obscurity. Also, certain figures, like Vivaldi and Monteverdi, finally are recognized by the general public as the giants they were, and such lesser composers as Cherubini and Sammartini are at least beginning to get the attention they deserve.

For all the thrill of such "discoveries", these examples illustrate individual cases which fit as details into pictures already familiar to us: in other words, the music of the various periods usually labeled "Baroque", "Classical", "Romantic", or "Modern". As such, therefore, they pale into relative insignificance when compared to an even greater consequence of the LP. This is not the rediscovery of any given composer, but the resurrection of the music of an entire era, or more accurately of two eras, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

For generations of music lovers these periods were closed books. True, the name of Palestrina was not unknown, but most of his works were. All the rest was a haze, acknowledged briefly if not timidly in music appreciation sermons, and perforce ignored by the mass audience. Names like Machaut, Lassus, Josquin, Dufay, Perotinus, or Byrd would bring gleams to the eyes of few but scholars. The persistent prejudice and misunder-

standing which is our heritage from the Enlightenment (if not from the Renaissance itself) discouraged any interest in medieval culture. Thus centuries of great music slept in oblivion under a tombstone marked "Pre-Bach".

Today, happily, more and more people are listening to medieval and renaissance music, acquainting themselves with the towering geniuses of these periods, and experiencing rich satisfactions. They are discovering that early works are not mere museum pieces, or mechanical exercises which served simply as foundations for great art to come later, or products of a crude and primitive infant art. Rather, they are finding that this music still has as much vitality and beauty as it had the day it was written, and that it can be appreciated on its own terms as great art just as much as the painting, sculpture, and architecture of the same periods.

With familiarity the listener soon reaches certain fundamental understandings. The first is that medieval and renaissance music is founded in a totally different conception of musical theory from what we take for granted, and is hence part of a different world of sound. This difference is all summed up in that confusing word "polyphony". The fact that polyphonic styles of writing have continued up to the present should not obscure the point that the many-voiced texture is the major and unavoidable distinguishing feature of the music of these eras. Upon this hangs the entire approach to early music. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century the Western ear has become attuned to music built around one dominant melodic line with almost everything else subordinate to it. But the earlier concept was of a musical sound built of equal and independent parallel elements. Thus, in the later music a single line carries the all-important melody while the other voices are concerned with harmony or



"Veni Sancte Spiritus"—Sequence from a Trope, probably written in Bavaria for a community of Augustinian hermits during the fifteenth century

accompaniment. In the earlier no strand of the music is the most important, but all weave together on an equal basis to form a rounded whole, so that the listener may immerse himself in a web of merging lines.

An aid to understanding this distinction is an awareness of the role of modes. A mode must be understood not as a key but as a scale, that is, an individual pattern or successive relationships of notes, the relationships being the distance between successive notes. Today we have only two modes, two types of scale patterns, the major and the minor; within these patterns we have the subdivisions of individual keys. But early music had a number of different modes. The exact figure varies: the Greeks established seven of them which, by the Middle Ages, had been elaborated and multiplied into the teens. Music was not written in keys in our sense, but in modes, each of which, it is true, like our keys began with different stipulated notes, but each of which had a different pattern of note relationships.

Now it must be understood that a musical system based on harmony, as is ours today, is distinctly handicapped by a multitude of modes. Modes are frameworks for melodies, not for harmonies, since for every different mode there must be a different system of harmony to match the differing patterns of note relationships. Today, as indicated, we are satisfied with but two of these systems, the major and the minor. But in the earlier periods, with no concern for harmony but with only the thought of developing melodic line, the modes were taken for granted in their multiplicity. Thus the modes, developed in antiquity and adopted by the Church, remained the basis of musical development for the first fifteen centuries or so of the Christian Era. It would be over-generalizing to

Sharing his enthusiasm for the music of the "pre-Bach" centuries is an extracurricular habit with Mr. Barker, who teaches history (specializing in the Byzantine Empire) at Rutgers University.

claim that the music of the periods I am discussing was solely modal. But the persistence of modality in renaissance polyphony is an important factor to be grasped. The emergence of an harmonic conception of music by the seventeenth century assured the triumph of keys as we have come to know them, and spelled the doom of the modes.

So much for the distinction between medieval-renaissance polyphony and later music, as far as the theoretical approach is concerned. But another fundamental distinction must be made as the listener delves deeper. That is the question of any difference between the medieval and renaissance styles themselves. The whole issue of when the Middle Ages end and the Renaissance begins is one of those over publicized historical problems which can never be definitively solved. In the musical sphere there are perhaps changes in style that may be noted and a line that can be drawn, albeit lightly. But these changes are no greater than others which occurred at other junctures within the medieval period proper. Musically speaking, therefore, the emphasis must be placed more upon continuity than upon change.

If a distinction is to be drawn, it ought to be rather between the music of the early Middle Ages and that of the "high" and late Middle Ages together with the Renaissance. The earlier period was dominated entirely by liturgical music, generally known in the West as Gregorian Chant or Plainchant; and of anything else we know very little. The world of Gregorian Chant is one all its own and has been given some attention for a long time, hence it does not fall into the categories at hand. Its influence in the later period must not be forgotten, but this was the influence of a dead art. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, about the time that the medieval world was beginning to stir and move on to its great intellectual revival in the "high" and late periods, a new type of music was emerging —polyphony. From the twelfth century on this new style grew and evolved and passed through several stages of maturity, reaching its final Indian summer in the opening decades of the seventeenth century. Thus the music of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is really one basic entity, distinguished not within itself but from the early medieval period —we shall avoid the term "Dark Ages"— and marked by a continuity centered around the development of pure polyphony. In sum, then, we would do well in what follows to categorize these periods simply as the Polyphonic Era.

An additional point to be borne in mind is that the music of this era tends to be choral or vocal. Instrumental music remained vague and informal, and a distinctive instrumental idiom did not emerge really until the end of the six-

teenth century, as our era ended. The human voice, especially in groups, was therefore the basic Polyphonic medium, and it is no surprise that this was one of the greatest ages of choral writing. The composers of the age understood and felt the subtleties and range of choral sound as few individuals and no schools have since. In addition, the best of Polyphonic music is usually to be found in liturgical music, at least until fairly late in the era.

When all these points are understood it is possible to meet this music on its own terms and to appreciate it for its true worth. Music which at first blind acquaintance seems meaningless and funereal soon takes on shape and beauty, and is recognized as truly moving art.

With deeper acquaintance the pattern of historical and stylistic evolution begins to emerge, and the listener can find his way around more comfortably in the various stages. The outlines are quite clear. Outside the borders of our era, Gregorian Chant played a significant role, serving not only as a quarry for thematic material but as the inspiration for that other-worldly, soaring, unfettered quality which is the hallmark of Polyphonic music. But polyphony did not begin until the practice of doubling a monodic chant melody in parallel intervals developed into a freer treatment of the additional voices, so that these voices ceased to be mere exercises in rhythmic and intervallic antithesis to the chant melody and assumed an independent role. The chant melody became then the core around which an original work was built.

The first flowering of a mature polyphonic style centered in the school of Notre Dame at Paris, whose leading personalities were to be Leoninus, about the middle of the twelfth century, and then Perotinus, about the beginning of the next century. The progress towards developing a fuller, richer, and freer idiom was further enhanced by the fourteenth century with the implementation of the theories of the *Ars Nova*, which introduced a wider range of technique and expression. Its outstanding exponent was the fascinating Guillaume de Machaut (c. 1300-1377), one of the giants of medieval music (as well as poetry). With the advent of the fifteenth century polyphony moved into another stage of maturity, in conjunction with the last flowering of medieval culture; much of its activity centered in the realms of Burgundy. In Guillaume Dufay (c. 1400-1474) medieval music may be said to have come to its fullest development in the exploitation of vocal mass and color.

Perhaps here may be drawn a line between the medieval and the renaissance, for now we approach another stage that emphasized more the interplay of various lines and different combinations of voices.

Foreshadowed by the Englishman John Dunstable (?-1453), it was fully initiated by Johannes Okeghem (c.1430-c.1495). With the latter began the celebrated Netherlands School of Polyphony, for Okeghem was not only an innovator and theorist but also a teacher. His pupils became the disciples of the new art. The greatest of them was Josquin des Prez (c.1445-1521), but the period abounds



Josquin des Prez

in names of polyphonic masters, an indication of the flourishing of the new art. As the sixteenth century progressed the Polyphonic Era moved into its last stage, illuminated by such immortals as Orlandus Lassus (1530-1594), Tomas Luis de Victoria (c.1535-1611), and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594).

Polyphonic art had now reached its final peak. Never before (or since) had composers shown such skill in the intricate interweaving of voices in marvelous patterns of sound, nor such a feeling for sublime, soaring choral line. Beyond the Continent an English school flourished as late as the beginning of the seventeenth century under the great Elizabethan triumvirate of Thomas Tallis (1505-1585), William Byrd (1543-1623), and Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625). But by this time something new was in the air. Polyphonic art had developed to such a state of perfection that any further progress presumably was limited and, as the rising generation of composers discovered, it would soon be abandoned completely. With Monteverdi (1567-1643) and the composers who were swept along with him came an entirely new musical idiom rooted in harmony, keys, measures, accompaniment (built over a figured bass), and much of what we associate with musical theory today. Polyphony died hard, and elements of it lived on. But it was dead as a vital force as the Baroque Era began in a new direction.

This, then, is the enormous range of musical activity which has been opened to the record-collector in the past few years. To give any adequate discography of this Polyphonic Age would be impossible here. But an attempt can be made to suggest some records which will serve to introduce the music-lover to this new-old world of musical experience.

Among the most familiar sources of listening material for this purpose has

been the recorded anthologies. The old *L'anthologie sonore* series has long been with us, and its LP reissue by the Haydn Society provides some items of interest in spite of their age. The peer among current anthologies is Decca's epoch-making Archive Series. We shall make reference below to some of its releases, and surely its medieval and renaissance records—most of which were made by Safford Cape's superb Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels—may be commended without exception. But among the LP anthologies one stands out especially for our purposes. This is RCA Victor's *History of Music in Sound*, as yet incomplete, which is perhaps the most successful attempt at a panoramic survey of music history within reasonable limits. Volume II, titled "Early Medieval Music up to 1300" (LM-6015) is wonderfully valuable for the student of polyphony, for the wise policy of choosing selections not only for artistic qualities but also for historical significance enables the listener to follow the stages of development with particular clarity, so that polyphony is virtually born before his very ears. Volume III, "Ars Nova and the Renaissance" (LM-6016) carries the picture from the fourteenth century into the sixteenth, and Volume IV, "The Age of Humanism" (LM-6029), covers the final phases of our Era, arbitrarily overlapping into the beginnings of the Baroque. These two latter volumes thus give a splendid cross-section of their subjects, with performances and recording almost invariably excellent.

A few individual recordings may be mentioned to represent specific subjects. One of the best samplers of medieval music may be found on the valuable (and alas, no longer active) EMS label (201):

in this the Brussels group presents a fine program of music ranging from Leoninus and Perotinus to thirteenth-century works, both sacred and secular, vocal and instrumental, and with annotations far superior to those prepared for their more recent Archive performances. The fourteenth-century master Machaut is most celebrated for his *Notre Dame Mass*; an older recording by the Dessoff Choirs (Concert Hall Society CHS-1107) is impressive, but probably more authentic is the performance by Cape's Brussels group on Archive (ARC-3032), which also offers some of Machaut's secular works, his most important contribution. A nice selection of his secular music also is offered on a Westminster disc (XWN-18166) by a group from the University of Illinois.

Moving into the fifteenth century, we come to one of the best re-creations of a work of medieval tonal art, London/L'Oiseau-Lyre's recording of the Dufay *Missa Caput*, performed in sublime fashion by the Ambrosian Singers (OL-50069). An enjoyable companion-disc is the Brussels program of Dufay's secular works (EMS-206). One of the best introductions to the last century of polyphony is the Epic record (LC-3045) made by the Netherlands Chamber Choir under Felix de Nobel. On one side is a superlative performance of Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*, on the other an ideal selection of sacred and secular works by late polyphonic masters; aside from the regrettable omission of texts, this issue is unqualifiedly recommended. Finally, while the religious music of Josquin has been neglected, the Brussels group has given us a fine collection of his secular music (EMS-213), including the unforgettable lament for Okeghem.



This contemporary miniature by the Maître aux Bouqueteaux shows Amour presenting Doux Penser, Plaisance, and Esperance to Guillaume de Machaut; from an autograph manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

"Beyond the Continent"

—Collateral Listening

Masters of Early English Keyboard Music, Vol. 3

Bull: *Een kindeken is uns geboren*; *Prelude and Fantasy on Sol ut—mi fa sol la*; *Fantasy in G*; *Pavan and Guilliard "Sinfoniae"*; *Vexilla regis*; *Fantasy on "La Guamina"*; *Prelude and Fantasy on "Laet uns met Herten reyne"*; *Salve Regina*; *Fantasy on a theme of Sweelinck*; Locke: *Six Voluntaries*; Thurston Dart (organ). London/L'Oiseau-Lyre OL-50130, \$4.98.

Masters of Early English Keyboard Music, Vol. 4

Gibbons: *Preludium*; *Galiard in C*; *Almain in C*; *Almain in C*; *The Wood so Wilde*; *Lady Hatton's Galliard*; *French Ayre*; *French Almain*; *Maske "Welcome Home"*; *Galliard in D*; *The Italian Ground*; *Fantasia of four parts*; Farnaby: *The old Spagnoletta*; *Spagnoletta*; *Meridian Alman*; *Tell me, Daphne*; *His Dreame*; *His Toye*; *His Reste*; *His Conceit*; *Tower Hill*; *Muscadin*; *The new Sahoo*; *Rosasolis*; *Galiarda*; *Lord Zouche's Maske*; *Loth to depart*; Thurston Dart (harpsichord). London/L'Oiseau-Lyre OL-50131, \$4.98.

▲WELL over a year ago the first two records in this continuing series were issued in America. Anyone interested in English keyboard music of the fourteenth through the eighteenth centuries would have done well to have acquired them. Now we are given two more discs, each devoted to two composers. Volume three features organ music of John Bull (c. 1563-1628) and Matthew Locke (1630-77) played on a bureau organ made about 1760 (which was also utilized in the previous set). The fourth volume contains works by Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) and Giles Farnaby (c. 1565-1640), and these are played on the harpsichord. There is no more persuasive interpreter of the music of these periods than Thurston Dart. He has made an exhaustive study of early English works and has written a definitive book on their performance; he has edited innumerable manuscripts; and if that were not enough he is an accomplished performer on both the organ and the harpsichord. It is no mean feat to make this music come to life as he does, for unless the performer knows the correct style, varies his registration tastefully, and above all plays with his heart, these works begin to grow tedious and monotonous. It is to Dart's full credit that this does not happen, and the recorded sound complements his performances of these fascinating pieces. The entire project is, in a word, commendable.

—I.K.

Record Reviews

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Cowper

ALFONSO EL SABIO: *Las Cantigas de Santa María*; Russell Oberlin (counter-tenor); Joseph Iadone (lute). *Expériences Anonymes EA-0023*, \$4.98.

▲THE monarch known as Alfonso the Wise, whose claim to fame was his fostering of the arts, lived from 1221 to 1284. Four copies of his monumental collections of *Cantigas*—songs glorifying the Virgin and recounting some of her miracles—have come down to us, and they are an invaluable source of knowledge of the poetry and music of the time. Several things we do not know about these songs: one, just to what extent the king really deserves the credit of authorship; another, exactly how the songs were performed. From illustrations in the surviving volumes one may gather that the songs were more elaborately accompanied than they are in this recording, granting that they may at times have been performed by a solo voice. The writer of the notes accompanying the record makes a big issue of the scholarly question of influences shown in the songs. He does not hold with Reese and other authorities that the Arabic influence has been exaggerated. Such questions aside, it is good to have so generous a sampling of these songs. The annotator apologizes for the fact that they could not be given in their entirety, pleading limitations of space. Strophic in form, they go on and on for many stanzas. The gifted Oberlin sings this selection earnestly and intelligently, with well pointed diction and bright, clear tone. Iadone, an excellent artist in his own right, keeps his lute playing quietly in the background.

—P.L.M.

BARTÓK: *Sonata* (1926); **PROKOFIEV:** *Sonata in A minor, Op. 28*;

RÓZSA: *Sonata* (1948); Leonard Pennario (piano). *Capitol P-8376*, \$3.98.

(Bartók) Skolovsky, Columbia ML-4871 (Prokofiev) Graftman, Victor LM-2012

▲ALTHOUGH the Bartók and Prokofiev Sonatas are both accorded technical assurance and considerable tonal vividness, Pennario's performances suggest that he is playing *on* the music rather than *in* it. In both works there is a strong element of biting sarcasm and satire that are better realized by Skolovsky (in the Bartók)

and Graftman (in the Prokofiev). More that is atmospheric, too, can be drawn from the strongly ethnic measures of the Hungarian master. Structurally, thematically, and stylistically the Rózsa seems to be a mingling of the two other works on this disc. As an entity, however, the sonata is highly successful, due in part to a first-rate presentation by Pennario. Capitol has maintained its usual high standard of reproduction.

—A.K.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*; **SCHUBERT:** *Symphony No. 8 (The "Unfinished")*; Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Arthur Winograd. *M-G-M E-3509*, \$3.98.

Munch, Boston, Victor LM-1923; Szell, Cleveland, Epic LC-3195

▲ON records, Arthur Winograd's first foray at the standard repertory. As a staff conductor for M-G-M (his only New York concert appearance was up at his alma mater, Juilliard) he has been entrusted heretofore with off-beat material such as Schönberg's "Pierrot" (E-3202) and Copland's *Music for Movies* (E-3367). This, then, is quite a departure, and its *raison d'être* must be the coupling. The Beethoven, because the tempi are rather deliberate, lacks intensity. But it is an authentic, if completely impersonalized, reading with no tricks or attempted insights; in fact, the presence of the conductor has been negated. The exception to this over-all impression is a strange rhythmic concept that appears just before the transition to the fourth movement. The Schubert, on the other hand, has some unique moments. In the introspective passages a chamber music quality is captured, in that the instrumentalists seem to respond to each other's sensitivity. And, since the orchestra is of moderate size, Schubert's lyricism is not robbed of its classical line.

—E.L.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68*; Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. *RCA Victor LM-2097*, \$3.98.

Toscanini, NBC, Victor LM-1702; Markevitch, Sym. Of Air, Decca DL-9907

▲MUNCH'S delivery features what might be called disintegratingly slow

tempi; the whole is virtually an extended *dolce e tranquillo*. Dramatic tension is almost nil. One waits for the strongly pulsating rhythms of the score to come through, but they never do. And the orchestra itself is not in its best form (the solo brass ensemble of the last movement is downright poor). Munch opened the 1952 Tanglewood season with this symphony. At that time his way with the work inclined to angular rhythmic distortions and over-accelerated tempi. But even at that his presentation was so positive that it almost convinced you that this was how to play the Brahms First. Liberties or no, the performance had personality—which is precisely what the present one lacks. Only the sonics are what they should be.

—A.K.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68*; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. *London LL-1608*, \$3.98.

(See previous review).

▲OF the many notable recordings of this masterpiece put the beautifully engineered Krips version near the top of the list. The treatment is broad, spacious, clearly detailed and most important, score-perfect. I couldn't find a single instance where the conductor asserted his own personality at the expense of composer's wishes. How carefully does Herr Krips make a crescendo to exactly the right level, hold a chord for its numerical life, start an accelerando not a moment before the scored indication; and how guilty are some other famous maestros of usurping and twisting the printed page to suit their own ends. That's what makes this performance so good. Whatever drama, mystery, longing or faith one feels listening to this sublime music, it belongs to Brahms. —E.L.

BRAHMS: *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24; Rhapsodies, Op. 79; Rhapsody in E flat, Op. 119, No. 4*; Victor Schiöler (piano). *Capitol P-18049*, \$3.98.

(Handel Variations) Istomin, Columbia ML-2211; Fleisher, Epic LC-3331; Malcuzynski, Angel 35349

▲THERE are few situations more frustrating to the record buyer than the co-existence of excellent (but differently excellent) performances of a desired work. Such is the case with the *Handel Variations*. Each of the several superlative interpretations stresses different aspects of this masterpiece. Malcuzynski's reading is on the grand scale; its lines are broad and its architecture massive. Fleisher points up the vivid coloration with an exposition full of technical fireworks and the dramatic bravura of youth. With Schiöler we find a warm Brahms, of deep feeling and a mature insight of almost stoic depth. Particularly impressive are the contrasting subtleties of light and shade in the sixth, eleventh, and thir-

teenth variations, those of style in the aria and variations one, four, seven, nineteen, and the fugue, and the gradations in texture and sonority in the second, twelfth (music box) and twenty-second (choral) variations. Technically the noted Dane has it a bit rough in the fifteenth variation, but this is a small matter in a performance of such superior musical values. Nowhere near the same high level are his conceptions of the three rhapsodies, which suffer from plodding tempi and lack of sweep and propulsion. The ritards inserted in the first of the *Op. 79* makes for less than exciting listening. Incidentally, my own favorite version of the *Op. 24* is currently withdrawn, having been issued on Columbia's ten-inch series. I list it above because it will shortly be coupled with another work and reissued on a twelve-inch disc. I refer to the performance by Istomin, which to my mind represents artistry on the sublime level.

—A.K.

R. CASADESUS: *Quintet in C for Piano and Strings, Op. 16*; Gaby Casadesus (piano); Guilet String Quartet; *Sonata No. 2 in A for Violin and Piano, Op. 34*; same pianist Daniel Guilet (violin); M-G-M E-3521, \$3.98.

▲**COMPOSER** Casadesus has of course been subordinated to pianist Casadesus. Only a small handful of his works (*Danses méditerranéennes* for two pianos, *Hommage à Chausson* for violin and piano, a sonata for flute and piano, and some keyboard pieces) have previously been recorded, so we must welcome these additional scores from one of the master musicians of our time. Both the *Quintet* and the *Sonata* are thoroughly French in flavor; they are not modern in the violently dissonant sense of the word but rather reminiscent of Fauré, Debussy, perhaps even Ravel. Basically impres-

CLEMENTI: *Trios: No. 1 in D; No. 2 in G; No. 3 in C; No. 6 in C; Op. 32, No. 1 in F; Op. 32, No. 2 in D; Trio di Bolzano*. Epic LC-3351, \$3.98.

▲**WHEN** one turns to the music of such a man as Clementi—a more than capable musician overshadowed by several giant contemporaries—the question arises whether his works are interesting primarily in the historical sense or simply as music engrossing to hear regardless of setting. In this case the verdict is split. There can be no denying that to Mozart-accustomed ears these trios sound somewhat limited and cadence-bound. One finds one's self thinking of what is prophesied in them; noting the seeds of dramatic contrast, for example, which are sown here to grow to maturity in the works of other men. But that is not the whole story. For one thing, the pianistic style displayed is full grown, and the manner of combining the keyboard and the two strings not far behind. Nor does Clementi sound as if he were experimenting; there

is present the sureness of a seasoned composer who knows what he wants to do and is doing it. One settles, then, for the fifty-fifty answer, with no complaints. The performances are brisk and musical. —S.F.

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DVORÁK: *Symphony No. 2 in D minor, Op. 70; Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik*. London LL-1606/7, \$3.98 each. ("New World")

Toscanini, NBC.....Victor LM-1778
Szell, Cleveland.....Columbia ML-4541
Fricsay, R.I.A.S.....Decca DL-9845

▲**THIS** is a superb performance of the "New World"; that of the earlier work represents a lesser achievement. Kubelik's way is to bring every line of the orchestration into sharp focus, to refrain from adapting headlong tempi, and yet to mold the music so that a natural propulsion keeps things moving. In this manner, strands of countermeasures and instrumental sonorities suddenly spring to the surface in bold relief. Of course, in the later work there is considerable competition, chiefly from Toscanini (whose interpretation is more taut and driven), Fricsay (who stresses lyricism), and Szell (somewhere in between). Although Kubelik's is not the ultimate statement in the D minor Symphony, it is far, far superior to any other version now on records. His tempi are on the spacious side, allowing for meticulousness in detail—except in the third movement which is a bit pushed. The playing of the Viennese and the reproduction are both superlative level.

—A.K.

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ELGAR: *Serenade in E minor for String Orchestra, Op. 20*; **BRAHMS:** *Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52, Nos. 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9*; **GRIEG:** *In the Popular Style, Op. 63, No. 1*; **DVORÁK:** *Nocturne in B Major for String Orchestra, Op. 40*; Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Cedric Dumont. Epic LC-3350, \$3.98. (Elgar)
Beecham, Royal Phil., Columbia ML-5031
(Dvorak)
Winograd, house orch., M-G-M E-3295

▲**LIGHT** summer listening may have been what Epic had in mind. Although all four composers have written lasting works in many forms, the general impression of this particular record is that of semi-classical mood music. The Brahms *Liebeslieder Waltzes* (as heard here in the Hermann arrangement for string orchestra) reminded me of nothing so much as lunching at Longchamps, and the remaining pieces sound no less innocuous. These compositions can be performed with considerably more inspiration and insight. The Boyd Neel Orchestra, too, has sounded better in the past; the string tone is a little edgy, and the usual sheen and glow of this fine group is missing.

—I.K.



Gaby and Robert Casadesus

FALLA: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain; Three Dances from the "Three-Cornered Hat"; Interlude and Dance from "La Vida Breve"; Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Columbia ML-5172, \$3.98.*

(Nights) Curzon, Jordi London LL-1397

(Three-Cornered Hat) Golshmann, St. Louis Capitol P-8257

Markevitch, Phila. Angel 35008 or 35152

▲THE operatic and balletic excerpts have been transferred from Columbia's now withdrawn "AL" (ten-inch) series. All those acquainted with this conductor's affinity to the works of the colorful Spaniard, and specifically with these superlative performances, will welcome the omnibus reissue. One small dissent must be registered, however, with the repeated liberties and *ritardandi* inserted into the Miller's Dance. The accompanying *Nights* is a new release in which Casadesus is at his best, which is to say that the performance leaves little to be desired. Ably abetted by Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic at their most brilliant, the gifted Frenchman presents an awesome study in contrasts of light and shadow, and of projection on different levels. The sonics are full-blown and clear. —A.K.

FRANCAIX: *Symphony for Strings;*

IBERT: *Divertissement; M-G-M String and Chamber Orchestra conducted by Carlos Surinach. M-G-M E-3514, \$3.98.*

Fiedler, Pops (Ibert). Victor LM-2084

▲THE 1949 Françaix score is a real delight—buoyant, sparkling, sometimes satiric, and now and then a bit raucous. It is also beautifully scored, obviously the work of an excellent craftsman. Now I want to hear more of Françaix's music. The ingenious and much more familiar Ibert spoof does not make an ideal coupling, if only because performances of higher polish are available. Surinach's are satisfactory, however. —T.T.

The Art of Frescobaldi: *Toccata quinta sopra i pedali; Toccata per l'Elevatione; Canzona seconda; Ricercar sopra Mi-Re-Fa-Mi; Magnificat secundi toni; Toccata sesta sopra i pedali (organ); Toccata nona; Cento Partite sopra Passacagli; Capriccio di durezze; Partite sopra "La Monicha"; Gustav Leonhardt (organ and harpsichord). Vanguard/Bach Guild BG-568, \$4.98.*

Müller, Neumeyer Archive ARC-3040

▲COMPOSER Frescobaldi and former Leonhardt have both become familiar through recordings in the last few years, each with distinction. As with a recent Decca Archive release, these two sides are devoted respectively to the composer's music for organ and harpsichord, but whereas that disc limits itself in the choice of works this record offers a more varied selection, providing a better cross-

GOTTSCHALK: *The Banjo, Ricordati, Bamboula (Danse de nègres); Serenade (Le Mancenillier); The Last Hope (Méditation religieuse); Le Bananier (The Banana Tree); Berceuse; Souvenir de Porto Rico (Marche des Gibaros); Pasquinade (Caprice); The Union (Concert Paraphrase on National Airs); Jeanne Behrend (piano). M-G-M E-3370, \$3.98.*

List Vanguard VRS-485

▲THIS composer (1829-1869) was the first to utilize our folk melodies and rhythms effectively in his own music. He was also the first American-born musician to achieve a fame as a piano virtuoso that corresponded to that of his contemporaries, Liszt and Chopin. Louis Moreau Gottschalk's music can hardly be termed profound, but it does carry a great deal of charm. The style is reminiscent of the foregoing, particularly in the handling of virtuoso passages. The first representative Gottschalk recital (by Eugene List) recently was issued on the Vanguard label. Now we have a second record, and unfortunately there is an inordinate amount of duplication. The earlier release contains twelve pieces, the newer one ten, and of these, six of the most important are on both. This poses a dilemma. Assuming that one probably will not acquire the two discs (although that certainly would be the ideal solution), one must decide between two very good presentations. The basic difference between the artists, I think, lies in their attitudes towards the main characteristics of Gottschalk's style—his use of folk elements and virtuosity *per se*. Jeanne Behrend, a most accomplished pianist,



...a great deal of charm

leans heavily on the folk aspect; she concentrates on flavor and on mood. List performs these pieces brilliantly, as though he were playing for a Carnegie Hall audience. Which to choose? My own preference is for the Vanguard version: for one thing, the piano is better recorded, more "live"; secondly, the sampling is a little more generous; and thirdly, List's virtuoso performances will, I believe, wear better in the long run than the musically but less sparkling interpretations of Miss Behrend. —I.K.

section of the Italian master's important contributions to early keyboard literature. The organ works well represent Frescobaldi as the first of the grand line of organ development which was to culminate in Bach. The harpsichord works enhance his position as a composer of originality and profundity, especially in the handling of variations. The Innsbruck organ used here is a fine late sixteenth-century instrument of great clarity—although one wonders if the composer, who was organist at St. Peter's in Rome, were not accustomed to a little wider range of sound. The harpsichord is small and clear, and it is recorded with effective closeness. The performances are tasteful, sensitive, and with a wholesome mixture of scholarship and artistry, although Leonhardt's registration on both instruments is a shade conservative. —J.W.B.

G. GABRIELI: *Symphoniae Sacrae (1587); New York Brass Ensemble conducted by Samuel Baron. Period SPL-734, \$4.98.*

▲SHADES of *sackbuts* and *cornetts* conjure up the magnificence of Renaissance Venice in these canzoni (*i.e.*, imitating the vocal style of the *chanson*) opulently per-

formed and recorded here by their modern counterparts—trumpets and trombones. Guaranteed to relieve your concerto-congested collection. Other Gabrieli canzoni have been done by this group for Esoteric; and for a vital rediscovery of the vocal canzoni of the *Symphoniae Sacrae*, try the Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus under "Woodie" on the Cambridge label. —J.B.L.

GRIEG: *Peer Gynt Suites 1 and 2; Four Norwegian Dances; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. Angel 35425, \$4.98 or \$3.48.*

Ormandy Columbia ML-5035

Remoortel (Norwegian Dances). Vox P-9840

▲THESE performances feature sheer luminosity and beauty of orchestral balance. Susskind uses his silky-smooth style of conducting here, and the near-perfect Philharmonia Orchestra plays with polish and sensitivity. This music often falls victim to an over-sweet, hackneyed sentimentality, but not in this instance. The mood is relaxed, and dignified. Susskind brings more energy to the *Norwegian Dances*, but good manners always prevail. I would call these per-

formances close to the best, but not better than Remoortel's amazing demonstration of virtuoso conducting on his Vox release. The Philharmonia is clearly a more skilled ensemble, but Remoortel gives more fire and "joie de vivre" to his readings and they are quite captivating. Vox's recording is more weighty in sound, but Angel's clean, crisp job is close to the highest standards, too. In sum, this release is entirely satisfactory, if not emotionally overwhelming, which the music does not have to be anyway. —D.H.M.

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HAYDN: *Piano Sonatas—No. 32 in B (Peters edition No. 39); No. 50 in C (Peters edition No. 42); No. 51 in D (Peters edition No. 38); No. 46 in A flat (Peters edition No. 8); Ernst Levy (piano).* Unicorn UNLP-1036, \$3.98.

▲IT is difficult to perceive Levy's reasons for applying romantic criteria to works of the classical period. Although no recordings of the pianistic style in Haydn's day are available, I am dead certain that arbitrary insertions of *rubati* and *allargandi* were not accepted practice. The taking of *crescendo* to mean *accelerando* and other wanton rhythmic and dynamic liberties only add to the travesty. The incongruous cover photo (a pile of lumber) seems to suggest that the artist might have been expressing his reaction too. Avoid. —A.K.

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HINDEMITH: *Theme with Four Variations ("The Four Temperaments") for piano and strings; Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 44, No. 4; Funeral Music for viola and strings; Leon Fleisher (piano), Paul Godwin (viola), Netherlands Chamber Orchestra conducted by Szymon Goldberg.* Epic LC-3356, \$3.98.

(*Four Temperaments*)
Otte Hindemith, Decca DL-9829

▲YOU will not find this in K. G. Roy's typically formidable notes, but it was a chance meeting of Hindemith and choreographer George Balanchine in the Carnegie Hall neighborhood that led directly to the composition of what subsequently became one of the most brilliant marriages of music and dance of our time (the latter's ballet, "The Four Temperaments"). Fleisher and Goldberg give the musico-psychological masterpiece a delineation of penetrating depth and excellent musical balance. Only the recording of Otte and Hindemith himself can be considered on an equal level of strength and definition. The five pieces, however, are less of a success. The third and fifth both have a tempo marking of *Lebhaft*. Had this been observed the whole would have a different complexion and contrast would have been established between the movements, particularly the second and third. But this performance of the *Trauermusik* (1936) is all that one could wish. The sound throughout is clean and alive. —A.K.

KHACHATURIAN: "Gayne" Suite; **MUSSORGSKY:** *A Night On Bald Mountain; BORODIN:* "Prince Igor" Overture; *On the Steppes of Central Asia; RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:* Flight of the Bumble-bee; Hallé Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. Mercury MG-50137, \$3.98.

▲ALTHOUGH Weldon has a firm grip on the orchestra, his work is surprisingly uneven. The three "Gayne" excerpts really catch fire and project beautifully, and yet the Mussorgsky conveys little of its inherent drama. Borodin's Overture is played with melting lyricism, but "On the Steppes of Central Asia" suffers from a coldly literal reading. The ensemble really does not have the technical and tonal assurance desirable, but Mercury's expert recording job makes it sound top-notch.

—A.K.

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KODÁLY: *Háry János (Viennese Clock, Song, Intermezzo); Children's Dances Nos. 1-5 and 7-12; Dances of Marosszék; Piano Pieces Op. 11, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6; Andor Foldes (piano).* Decca DL-9913, \$3.98.

▲FOLDES knows how to get a remarkable variety of colors from the keyboard. The *Háry János* selections are his own arrangements and we are told that they were approved by the composer, but I cannot believe that the endorsement was enthusiastic because this is definitely orchestral music, without regard to this consideration the Foldes settings are splendid, and the performance is outstanding. The *Children's Dances* are all written on the black keys. This would seem like an impossible limitation, but there is never a dull moment; these tidbits are clever, amusing, and absorbing. The *Dances of Marosszék* is as colorful a *tour de force* as you are likely to encounter. The folk idiom involved sounds surprisingly Spanish to my ears, although the main theme is unmistakably Hungarian. The folksong element is less in evidence in the *Piano Pieces*, which explore tonal color combinations while sometimes neglecting musical idea. And yet they sustain interest; for a man who is not a pianist, Kodály certainly knows how to write for the instrument! All this music is Foldes' meat, no doubt about that. He plays with a relish and skill which are most convincing. And the recording engineers have been most kind. —D.H.M.

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MOZART: *Das Veilchen, K.476; Die Zufriedenheit, K.473; An Chloe, K.524; Das Lied der Trennung, K.519; Die kleine Spinnerin, K.531; Geheime Liebe, K.150; Der Zauberer, K.472; Sehnsucht nach dem Frühling, K.596; Un moto di gioia, K.579; Oiseaux, si tous les ans, K.307; Dans un bois solitaire, K.308; Ridente la calma, K.152; Das Kinderspiel, K.598; Abendempfindung, K.523; An die Einsam-*

keit, K.391; Die Verschweigung, K.518; Warnung, K.433; Rita Streich (soprano) and Erik Werba (piano). Decca DL-9915, \$3.98.

▲HERE is yet another singer in essentially the same Mozart recital—it can no longer be said that these songs are neglected and unknown. To give her program its touch of individuality, Miss Streich has found two more lieder that are not in the standard Mozart song album: *Geheime Liebe* and *Wie unglücklich bin ich nit*. Her singing ranks easily with the best we have in this music. Preeminently a musical singer, she has a sense of tempo, and as a rule her pacing is convincing. Only one of the songs seems to me definitely questionable, and this is *Ridente la calma*, which, like so many singers, she takes too slowly for my taste. Her tone quality is always bright and pleasing, her treatment of the words expressive. The two little French songs come off very happily, and two of the finest of the German ones—*Abendempfindung* and *Das Lied der Trennung*—seem to me better done than in any other recordings I know. I think the singer is wise, too, in cutting some of the stanzas in the long strophic songs. —P.L.M.

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PALESTRINA: *Missa Brevis; Missa Ad Fugam; J. S. BACH:* *O Lamm Gottes unschuldig; Herzliebster Jesu; O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden; LOTTI:* *Vere languores nostros; Crucifixus; LAS- SO: Adoramus Te, Christe; GALLUS:* *Ecce quomodo moritur;* Netherlands Chamber Choir conducted by Felix de Nobel. Epic LC-3359, \$3.98.

▲THE two Palestrina Masses offer a striking contrast: the *Missa Brevis*, the later and more famous work, is far more varied in its musical technique (homophonic sections frequently appear among the contrapuntal) and its text is easier to follow. The *Missa Ad Fugam*, as its name implies, is canonic throughout. Some questions are raised by the recording and its explanatory notes, for we are told there is no *Credo* in this Mass, certainly there is none sung in the recording, yet in the printed score there is one! Similarly, though without explanation, the *Benedictus* and the first *Agnus Dei* are omitted. It seems possibly even more strange that these two Masses should have been combined with the group of miscellaneous pieces that follow, with three Protestant hymns in Bach's harmonizations leading into the two fine pieces of Lotti (including the sonorous *Crucifixus* with organ, recently heard in a Concord recording along with the R.P.E. Martin Mass). The style of the Netherlands singers takes a welcome middle course between the almost violent energy of the Italian choirs that sing Palestrina and the ethereal, nebulous quality of English groups. Everything here is solid, clean and nicely in tune. —P.L.M.

PROKOFIEV: Piano Sonatas Nos. 1-9;

Yury Boukoff (piano). Westminster XWN-18369/70/71, \$3.98 each.

▲THE first nine Prokofiev sonatas cover a creative period of forty years (1907-1947). There is a Tenth (*Op. 135*) which in actuality is an extensive revision of the Fifth. Presumably for this reason, it has not been included among those in the present release. Contrariwise, the original Fifth is not to be found in the standard one-volume edition of the "Complete" Sonatas published by Leeds.

The Russian master's compositions fall into four distinct phases, beginning with the period he spent as a student of composition with Liadov (1909-1914) in St. Petersburg prior to his first travels abroad. The *F minor Sonata, Op. 1* (the first movement of which is from an earlier, otherwise discarded work in three movements) was the vanguard for such as the First Piano Concerto, *Op. 10* (1911) and the now famous *Toccata* for piano (1912). These were neoromantic years, with only here and there a hint of the biting wit that was soon to emerge as Prokofiev's hallmark. Although the Third and Fourth Sonatas were completed in post-student days, these along with the Second must be considered in this first period inasmuch as all were originally sketched in 1907. The lyricism still persists in them but already harmonic distortions, angular thematic material, and increased rhythmic compulsion were beginning to spice the softness. (It is curious that in this period in particular, as well as in later times, Prokofiev, unlike his fellow Russians, drew little from native and/or folk origins.) With the explosive and primitive *Scythian Suite*, the first era drew to a close. The sibling had spoken and the words were his own, no longer colored by Rachmaninov, Medtner, nor any of their nineteenth-century models.

Prokofiev left St. Petersburg in May, 1918 and sailed to the United States. America's reaction was one of curiosity towards what was called "the new Bolshevik culture", though in truth few could have been so naively unaware of political currents as Prokofiev was in those years. His time here was almost completely filled with orchestral appearances and recitals. The programs were devoted to his own music until the initial novelty wore off. Then they were given over to the usual Chopin, Schumann, and Rachmaninov (who was then very much in vogue on these shores) with only here and there a sly insertion of one or two of his pieces. A welcome cable from Paris resulted in a return to Europe for extensive revisions on *Chout*, which was given its première under the aegis of the great Serge Diaghilev. Needless to say, all this left scant time for composition. Only a few short piano arrangements (of an organ fugue of Buxtehude and some Schubert waltzes and *Ländler*), were forthcoming. In Chicago as well as New York,



...from lyricism to lyricism

the "Love For Three Oranges" had been a dismal failure. The same fate awaited the Third Piano Concerto. The *enfant* was thirty-two when, weary and disheartened, he slipped away to Bavaria for an extended inventory and soul-searching. Thus ended his second period.

The Fifth Sonata appeared in 1926. Compositionally, the growth was manifestly immense, for not only had the architecture underlying Prokofiev's esthetic undergone development, but also an expanded style fraught with chromatic complexities had evolved. Despite the opposite opinion of respected fellow reviewers, the (old or new) Fifth remains for me a great work, at once bitterly ironic and sadly elegiac. Its flavor is introspective but its statement is emphatic. It is not surprising that in this period there emerged only one piano sonata, and that another sixteen years would pass before the composer felt he had additional thoughts to express in this particular form. Largely through the efforts of Serge Koussevitzky (in Europe as well as here), the public ear in the meantime became accustomed to the peculiar sonorities of Prokofiev and began to understand what the fervent Russian was trying to say. A highly successful second tour of this country followed a losing bout with the Stravinsky cult in Paris. Then his music began to appear on records, and orchestras clamored for solo engagements. It was in triumph that he returned to Europe, and thence to Russia. The year was 1939, and Prokofiev by now had become very much aware of current situations; the Sixth and Seventh Sonatas are both bitter reminders of the time and place of their composition. Their "answers" to the "questions" posed by the Fifth were thunderous and angry. The introspection had turned to violent dissonance, calculated and programmatic. Once or twice in the Sixth, the music seems to pause in nostalgic remembrance, only to be caught up in the swirling pace. A relentless use of rhythmic vituperation and blatant dissonance mark the war years—the composer's third period.

Although the Eighth was one of the "War Sonatas", it represents the end of the storm, and the calm following, rather

than the heat of battle. It also signaled the return to lyricism, not of former days, but of a matured artist who had made his peace. The peace was a personal one only, for Prokofiev's problems with the "party line" had begun and were to continue until his death. A broadening of thematic invention and subtlety of rhythmic structure mark these last years. The final period reached its greatest expression with the Symphony No. 5, *Op. 100*. The *Op. 103* Sonata, in C, poses no problem for any ears.

Westminster has wisely (if inevitably) grouped the sonatas according to the various compositional periods. The thirty-two-year-old Boukoff, who performs them, is less than ideal, but his performances contain much that is of merit. Because he employs a staccato style and a peculiarly non-sonorous tone, his conception tends to be narrow and confining, especially among the sweeping phrases of the later works. A bit of bravura and showmanship here might have been effective. His technique is flawless, but it is vertical, each tone or chord tending to be a separate entity rather than an integral part of a melodic phrase. To his credit are an unquestionable sincerity, and an ability to lay bare the essentials of thematic design and contrapuntal harmonic structures, which he exposes with admirable definition. Nevertheless, top interpretative honors continue to be held by Graffman in the Second and Third Sonatas (Victor LM-2012), and by Horowitz in the Seventh (Victor LM-1016, now withdrawn). Except for these, Boukoff can be recommended.

—A.K.

RACHMANINOV: Piano Concerto No.

2 in C minor, Op. 18; FRANCK:
Symphonic Variations; Philippe Entremont (piano) with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr and Carl Bamberger respectively. Concert Hall Society CHS-1501, \$3.98.

Rachmaninov.....in Victor LM-6123
Kapell.....Victor LM-1097
Istomin.....Columbia ML-5103
(Franck)
Fleisher.....Epic LC-3330

▲THERE is no doubt that Entremont is one of the more gifted of the younger pianists. His recent appearances in this country have been highly successful and his future seems assured. Under these circumstances, it is hardly fair to him for the public to be offered those recordings of his which did not have the advantage of the best engineering, which this Rachmaninov decidedly did not. Much of the time the piano sounds lifeless, flat, even though it is apparent that Entremont is giving a good performance. The orchestra also suffers, although its performance is not very good anyway. The Netherlands Philharmonic (principally a radio ensemble) is well staffed with Concertgebouw players as a rule. My guess

is that the Concertgebouw was away on tour when these recordings were made. Altogether, the Franck comes off better. The piano here sounds less brittle, and Bamberger (former conductor of the now defunct Southern Symphony Orchestra of Columbia, S. C.) provides good support.

—T.T.

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"Hi Fi Fiedler" — **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV**: Suite from "Le Coq D'or"; **ROSSINI**: Overture to "William Tell"; **TCHAIKOVSKY**: Marche slave; Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. RCA Victor LM-2100, \$3.98.

(*Coq D'or*)
Dobrowen, Phil. Angel 35010
(Rossini)

Toscanini, NBC Victor LM-2040

▲ ALL three are dressed up in their Sunday best and given performances of high polish and excitement. Even so, I find the "Coq D'or" (which omits the Prelude and Introduction to the First Scene of Act III, the Death of Dodon, and the orchestral close of the opera normally included in the suite) a bit tedious without the accompanying stage action. This is in no way a disparagement of Fiedler, for his way with the score is beyond cavil. Also, he seems to be able to generate the charged lightning effect that Toscanini imbued Rossini's overtures with. The Tchaikovsky makes a happy discomfit for the other two. As to sound, an examination of my notes for this review shows but one word: "Wow!" —A.K.

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RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: "The Tale of Tsar Saltan" Suite, Op. 57, "May Night" Overture; Russian Easter Overture; L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernst Ansermet. London LL-1635, \$3.98.

(*Tsar Saltan*)
Dobrowen, Phil. Angel 35010
(*Russian Easter*)

Paray, Detroit Mercury MG-50028
Stokowski Victor LM-1816

▲ALTHOUGH I realize that this is a minority opinion, I have to say that after listening to Ansermet for some dozen years, both in concert and on records, he seems to me a highly over-rated musician of limited artistic imagination and not too discerning an ear (the LPs of the Suisse Romande Orchestra are rife with technical fluffs and faulty intonations), whose prevailing level of work is at best routinely competent. If a future Ansermet release gives reason for higher esteem, I shall be the first to acknowledge the fact in print. His latest issue from London offers mixed value. Ansermet chooses to follow the composer's written wishes in "Tsar Saltan" and consequently turns in a performance of considerable credibility. But he flagrantly ignores the noted tempi and dynamics, with dismal results, in *Russian Easter*. And a spark of imagination would have added life to his otherwise earthbound conception of "May Night". From the opening horn statement (played

at the tempo of a funeral knell though clearly marked 84 to the quarter note) Ansermet makes the usually festive *Russian Easter Overture* into a lugubrious, dragged out affair, totally ignoring such dynamic markings as *agitato* (at the outset of the allegro section), *animato*, and the composer's own note ("In my overture are combined reminiscences of the ancient prophecy and of the gospel narrative; also a general picture of the Easter service with its pagan merry-making"), as well as tempi indications such as *alla breve* and *l'istesso tempo*. It is further sad commentary on the conductor when, as in the present instance, he either fails to hear the flat intonations of his own concertmaster in the one big solo passage or, still worse, hears it and approves the performance for release anyway. Though not so blatantly disobedient of dynamic indications, his reading of the "May Night" Overture suffers from a limpness of interpretation. The deft lightness that the composer wrote into the score is nowhere evident. Only the "Tsar Saltan" Suite bears the mark of conviction, principally because Ansermet chose to take the composer at his word. He is matched, however, by Dobrowen (on Angel) whose orchestra (the Philharmonia) is of superior mettle. The engineering on this London disc is of fine quality. —A.K.

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ROSSINI: Overtures to "William Tell" and "The Barber of Seville"; **DONIZETTI**: Overture to "The Daughter of the Regiment"; **SCHUBERT**: Marche Militaire in D, Op. 51, No. 1; **J. STRAUSS I**: Radetzky March, Op. 228; **TCHAIKOVSKY**: Marche slave, Op. 31; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux and the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Paul van Kempen. Epic LC-3349, \$3.98.

▲ EACH of these falls into the blood and guts, or boilermaker, category. The Epic engineers have seen to it that the fit is 100% hi to boot. The combined onslaught upon the ear might be called "An hour with a pile driver". As individual performances, the two Rossini overtures emerge a bit deliberate in tempi and contrived in the accelerated portions. This is not to say that the readings do not have a healthy vitality, and considerable style. Kempen's all-stops-out treatment of the Donizetti almost convinces one that it is good music. The remaining marches are projected with fine spirit, but all too realistically. —A.K.

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ROSSINI: Overtures—"Barber of Seville", "Semiramide", "Signor Bruschino"; "Italian Woman in Algiers"; "The Thieving Magpie", "The Silken Ladder"; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the RIAS Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, both conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. Decca DL-9902, \$3.98.

Toscanini, N.B.C. Sym. RCA Victor LM-2040

▲ DESPITE the gorgeous playing of the Berliners and the fine intentions of Fricsay, the competition is none less than Toscanini, beside whose interpretations these appear rather pallid. All of them lack the force and propulsion of the late Italian master, his great dynamic contrasts, and the rich flavor with which he imbued these time-worn warhorses. Also absent is his infallibly Verdian sense of pacing. But then, Fricsay did not know Verdi. The sound is clear on those performances of Berlin Philharmonic origin; a certain dryness pervades the others.

—A.K.

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SCHUBERT: "Lazarus"; Helmut Kretschmar (Lazarus); Rico Monte (Nathaniel), Barbara Troxell (Maria); Ingeborg Reichelt (Jemina); Else Siekbach (Martha); NDR Chorus and Hamburg Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Arthur Winograd. M-G-M E-3526, \$3.98.

▲ THE unfinished "Lazarus, oder die Feier der Auferstehung" is a kind of opera-oratorio on a text by A. H. Niemeyer. Carl A. Rosenthal and Abram Loft, in their chapter on the church and choral music in Gerald Abraham's Schubert symposium (Oxford), dismiss the fragment as not "palatable to the modern audience", concluding "it is doubtful whether the musical content of this work offers enough sustained interest to warrant revival". The late Alfred Einstein felt differently. In a passage quoted by Edward Cole in his notes accompanying this recording, Einstein finds in the score historical importance beyond that of Wagner's "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin"; among various "sublime things" in the score he points out Jairus' daughter's description of her death, entry into paradise, and return to earth. It is Einstein's suggestion that the completed first act be presented as "The Death of Lazarus", a thing in itself that could "testify in our concert halls to Schubert's dramatic and musical greatness". Following this recommendation, M-G-M assembled a group of singers and a conductor who obviously agree that this is important music. It is not easy music to sing, and the two tenors, for all their sense of style, have some trouble meeting the vocal demands. Happily, however, Kretschmar, who sings the title role, rises nobly to his most important moment, the aria *Viel selige Stunden*, just before Lazarus dies. The women of the cast are better. Else Siekbach has an admirably pure and straight voice, and sings with dignity. Barbara Troxell, whose rich tones are familiar, brings distinction to her role; and Ingeborg Reichelt is admirably youthful as Jemina, the daughter of Jairus. I cannot agree with Rosenthal and Loft, who find the orchestration uninteresting, for Winograd has brought out many striking details. Einstein was right. —P.L.M.

SCHUMANN: *Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54*; **WEBER:** *Konzertstück in F minor, Op. 79*; Friedrich Gulda (piano), Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Volkmar Andreae. London LL-1589, \$3.98.

(Schumann).

Lipatti, Karajan

Columbia ML-4525

(Weber)

Casadesus, Szell

Columbia ML-4588

▲FOR those interested in a good example of how NOT to play the Schumann this release is highly recommended. The fault is not entirely the soloist's, for the conductor fails even to maintain a balance within the orchestra, let alone to infuse the players with any inspiration or vitality. The results are dragged, heavy-footed tempi, particularly in the final two movements, causing the work to spill over onto the second side (broken, at that, in mid-phrase, when a most obvious place was to be found but eight bars hence), a bloodless, soggy, earthbound quality that defies categorizing, and therefore, in sum, sheer boredom. The use of a simple metronome to clock the written intentions of the composer would have made for a vast improvement. A more interesting, but hardly definitive reading of Weber's *Konzertstück* fills out the "B" side. The engineering is of high quality. —A.K.

SCHUMANN: *March No. 2, Op. 76*; *Waldscenen, Op. 82* *Fantasiestücke, Op. 12* (abridged); Sviatoslav Richter (piano). Decca DL-9921, \$3.98.

(Fantasiestücke)

Novae

Vox PL-10170

▲GREAT virtuosi are not uniformly successful in making contact with Schumann—or Mozart—and we should not therefore be surprised to find something lacking in, say, Horowitz's super-Slavic Schumann, or in Gilels' machinegun Mozart. Although the Novaes interpretation is lovely, Richter's only real competition comes from Moisiewitch on a now-deleted Bluebird, and of course the sound of that does not even begin to approach Deutsche Grammophon's. The more I ruminate, the more I realize that worthy Schumann playing is harder to come by than worthy Mozart. Is this because Mozart is considered by pianists a greater composer and therefore deserving of greater attention? I would not trade these pieces performed thus for a Mozart Sonata by Landowska. I'd insist on having both! Not quite to be forgiven here is the omission of *Grillen* and *Fable* from what should have been a complete *Op. 12*. Also, Richter occasionally cannot restrain himself from breaking all records for sheer virtuosity at the expense of poetry, Schumann, or what have you (as in *Traumeswirren*). Under the circumstances, however, this can be overlooked. —J.B.L.

STRAVINSKY: *Firebird Suite*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Overture-Fantasy, Romeo and Juliet*; Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by

Leonard Bernstein. Columbia ML-5182, \$3.98.

Ormandy Columbia ML-4700

Stokowski, NBC Victor LM-9029

▲DESPITE exaggerated dramatics (though less so than Toscanini) and accents, particularly in the introductory measures, the Tchaikovsky is as fine a performance as one is likely to find on records. The *Firebird* is a less happy musical experience. From the opening ominous bass progressions, here as usual played too slowly (only Ormandy takes Stravinsky at his word and plays the introduction at the written tempo of 108 to the quarter note) through to the *Firebird's* Dance (given an uncommonly rough texture), the *Danse infernal*, *Berceuse* (taken at a considerably faster pace than indicated) and the finale, the performance is short on atmosphere and tension. Bernstein again ignores the explicit *poco a poco allargando* written in the final bars, substituting complete stops between chords and thus breaking the melodic and lyric line. The reproduction is full and vibrant. —A.K.

SURINACH: *Second Symphony*; **TURINA:** *Rapsodia Sinfonica*; Sondra Bianca (piano, in the latter) and the Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Arthur Winograd. M-G-M E-3510, \$3.98.

▲FOLK melodies are the source of his music; their rhythms are the food that keep it healthy and strong; and his classic formal education makes this flamboyant flamenco an accepted member at the round table of composers. The materials of the Symphony are familiar, and his handling of them is completely within the Ravel tradition. Its uniqueness is in his attempt to work out a legitimate symphonic structure in an idiom that heretofore has been most successful in a suite or rhapsodic form. And this Surinach actually has done—true, in a most conventional manner, but it makes good listening in the present rousing rendition. The Turina is a filler. Its content and length make it perfect dinner music. —E.L.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35*; Erica Morini with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. Westminster XWN-18397, \$3.98.

Heifetz Victor LM-1832

▲MORINI'S version of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto has been familiar to record collectors for some years, since she once recorded it with the Chicago Symphony under Désiré Defauw (this was transferred to LP on the Bluebird label but has recently been withdrawn). Now, with the benefit of superior recording, she has done it again with Artur Rodzinski. The tempi are somewhat on the slow side, so the concerto takes the whole disc; other versions such as the Heifetz, Francescatti, Rabin, and Gitlis take only one or one and a half sides for the complete

work. Francescatti's version is less romantic; Oistrakh's is more fiery; Heifetz' is more spectacular; Milstein combines most of the favorable qualities of all these. There are so many excellent performances of this favorite concerto, indeed, that the buyer is faced with several alternates. This latest may be ranked among the best on all counts. —R.R.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Excerpts from "The Nutcracker", Op. 71*; Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. RCA Victor LM-2052, \$3.98.

▲FIEDLER must be given credit—alone among American conductors (and Europeans too, except for Fistoulari)—for having sufficient curiosity and enterprise to delve beyond the hackneyed "Suite" into what is the score's most beautiful music. It is further refreshing to hear this music expounded by a first-rate symphonic organization rather than the usually shoddy, undersized, and poorly conducted ensembles that seem to suffice for the present powers that be (Balanchine excepted) of the ballet world. To be sure, the current release does contain the entire so-called First Suite (though in proper balletic sequence among the additional numbers), but it also offers the music depicting the Christmas tree transformation, the coming to life of the toys and gingerbread men, the winter scene (*Snow pas de deux* and waltz), the gorgeous *Grand pas de deux* with its variations and coda, various little known divertimenti, and the waltz finale. The performance is for the most part excellent. Not, unfortunately, the snow scene, which is played at too fast a pace and without the dramatic sweep and grandeur the music calls for. The tempi adopted are those for concert rather than stage, particularly that of the tarantella (man's variation), the sugar plum fairy and the Chinese men. Fiedler plays the three-heard *Waltz of the Flowers* exactly as written, which is to say without the usually inserted accelerando at the end. Somehow—call it obeisance to tradition—I prefer it with the liberty. The engineering is of top quality. —A.K.

WALDTEUFEL: Waltzes: *Les Patineurs*; *Mon rêve*; *Estudiantina*; *Grenadiers*; *Pomone*; *Espana*; Philharmonia Promenade Orchestra conducted by Henry Krips. Angel 35426, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

Ormandy Columbia CL-849

Fiedler Victor LM-1226

▲AN album of one hundred per cent charm, and beautifully recorded. *Les Patineurs*, perhaps the most familiar selection, is conducted with lightness and grace. Henry Krips (yes, he is Josef's brother) realizes that these pieces are not Viennese in style and he treats them with far less heavy accents, bringing out a more refined French delicacy which is quite bewitching. —D.H.M.

SOPRANOS: Promise and Fulfillment

Operatic Recital: "Aida"—*O patria mia*; "I Vespri Siciliani"—*Bolero* (Verdi); "Norma"—*Casta diva* (Bellini); "Agnes von Hohenstaufen"—*O re dei cieli* (Spontini); "Nabucco"—*Anch' io dischiuso un giorno*; "Ernani"—*Ernani, involami* (Verdi); "Tosca"—*Vissi d'arte* (Puccini); "La Forza del Destino"—*Pace, pace, mio Dio* (Verdi); Anita Cerquetti (soprano) with Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Gianandrea Gavezzani. London LL-1601, \$3.98.

▲THIS disc introduces a young Italian soprano who has won high praise in Chicago as well as in her native land. The program might have been designed to show on the one hand her taste in unfamiliar repertory and on the other her way with the thrice-familiar. Unquestionably she is potentially an important singer, though she still has some crudities to overcome. One gets the impression that her voice is a big one, and should easily dominate a big ensemble in the opera house. Her *O patria mia* shows what is best in her dramatic singing, though it also reveals her inclination to carry emotionalism a bit too far. The *Bolero* that follows calls for something else, something she is only partially equipped to give. There is considerable facility in her singing, but her tempo is deliberate and she has a tendency to stay rather close to the ground. The final trill and flourish are hardly the spontaneous expression of a really finished vocalist. There are excellent things in the *Casta diva* (given, like the "Ernani" air, without *cabaletta*)—notably the hushed opening and a quite exciting descending chromatic run—and there are also some heavy spots. The Spontini air is an interesting novelty. It is passionately sung, which is appropriate, but it lacks the ring of real authority. The "Nabucco" piece is better in this respect. The first sustained note of *Pace, pace* has a good swell and diminuendo, but it would have been better had she taken a little more time with it. All through this aria, indeed, there is a sense of hurry. To sum up: this is an attractive record that promises more than it achieves. —P.L.M.

Recital of Songs and Arias: Leggiadri occhi belli (Anon.); *Le violette* (Scarlatti); *Piangerò la sorte mia* (Handel); *Lungi dal caro bene* (Sarti); *La Promessa* (Rossini); *Dolente imagine di Fille mia* (Bellini); *Vanne, o rosa fortunata* (Bellini); *Stornello* (Verdi); *Al folto bosco*; *Cantava il ruscello*; *Sur mar al navicella* (Martucci); *A la Barcillunisa* (Pavar); *Passo e non lo vedi* (Masseti); *Cantares* (Turina); Renata Tebaldi (soprano) and Giorgio Favaretto (piano). London LL-1571, \$3.98.

▲TEBALDI, like every Italian opera singer, must have her program of *bel canto* arias and modern songs from her native land. Her selection is rather more miscellaneous than most of the type, but at the same time more novel. The modern group (including one Spanish song) is the kind of fare that is important only as it is importantly sung. Tebaldi brings to it very much the same kind of art she applies to the classic arias. Her voice is



in fine estate; her tones float easily and she keeps them light. It would seem she is determined to eschew the broad lines of opera, which is generally an admirable resolve, though in at least one case—the superb *Piangerò* which is actually an opera air, from "Giulio Cesare"—just such a line is called for. *Lungi dal caro bene*, whose operatic connections are less obvious to the modern listener, elicits some of the soprano's best work. Speaking of the program generally, it is presented with admirable taste even if it never quite achieves the distinction a lively imagination would have given it. Vocally the besetting fault is a tendency for certain top tones to slip a little out of line. Still, there is plenty here for the Tebaldi fans to point to with pride. —P.L.M.

Operatic Recital: "Giulio Cesare"—*Hast du mich ganz berauscht; Es blaut die Nacht; Breite aus, die gnäd'gen Hände; Weine nur, klage nur; Heil und sicher kam mein Nachen* (Handel); "Don Giovanni"—*In qual' eccessi... Mi tradi; Ah! fuggi il traditore; Crudel... Non mi dir; "Così Fan Tutte"* —*Per pietà, ben mio; Nozze di Figaro*—*Dove sono* (Mozart); Lisa Della Casa (soprano) with Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips, Karl Böhm and Erich Kleiber. London LL-1567, \$3.98.

Lieder Recital: *Auf dem Wasser zu singen*, Op. 72; *Im Frühling*; *Du bist die Ruh'*, Op. 59, no. 3; *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, Op. 2 (Schubert); *Wie Melodien zieht es mir*, Op. 105, no. 1; *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer*, Op. 105, no. 2; *Von ewiger Liebe*, Op. 43, no. 1; *Ständchen*, Op. 106, no. 1 (Brahms); *Der Gärtner; Begegnung; Geh', Geliebter, geh' jetzt; Er ist's (Wolf)*; —P.L.M.

Einerlei, Op. 69, no. 3; *Ich wollt' ein Sträuslein binden*; Op. 68, no. 2; *Schlechtes Wetter*, Op. 69, no. 5; *Befreit*, Op. 39, no. 4 (R. Strauss); Lisa Della Casa (soprano) and Karl Hudez (piano). London LL-1535, \$3.98.

▲AMONG operatic sopranos Della Casa has a large amount of personal charm and stage ability. Her voice is sweet, rounded and pure, not big. Her style, conforming to her natural gifts, is rather intimate than broad and sweeping. She is, indeed, a more genuinely lyrical singer than we generally associate with some of the music on her first program. The "A" side is given over to arias from Handel's "Julius Caesar", an opera she has been singing with great success abroad. The version she uses is that of Oskar Hagen, a fine arts professor whose enthusiasm for Handel was responsible for many of the revivals in Germany during the twenties. He translated the librettos into German, often actually adapting rather than literally following the original Italian expression. Convinced that the operas were too long and sometimes too stilted for modern ears, he abbreviated and rearranged arias, recitatives and scenes with a free hand. Musicologists, therefore, will find much to quarrel with in this group of arias; yet they are delivered with such tonal sweetness and pure expressiveness that I am sure they will be enjoyed. I have no doubt a singer with the true grand manner would make something bigger of them, but this would not be in character here. With one exception the Mozart arias are taken from complete opera sets. The two arias of Donna Elvira, from "Don Giovanni", have already had their mete of praise. Again the singer scales the character to her own gifts. She is certainly one of the finest Elviras of our day. As Donna Anna she is less at home, though again she puts over her ideas successfully. One does miss the big style in the "Così Fan Tutte" aria, but *Dove sono* is touchingly sung.

By all that is right such an artist should be a natural lieder singer, yet the second disc is evidence that she still has some distance to go before taking her place in the front rank. She has a distinctive way with the Schubert songs. The words are pointed with care and understanding, perhaps a little exaggerated, the tone lovely. Sometimes her phrasing is a little weak at the seams; sometimes she clips the end of a line. But only in *Gretchen am Spinnrade* does it become clear to what extent her pianist is to blame for a lack of spark. To make matters worse, the balance works against him. The lighter songs that follow are more successful than the heavier ones; *Geh', Geliebter, geh' jetzt* is singularly unimpassioned. But in the Strauss songs the singer hits her stride, and all four of them are lovely. This may be a little surprising in the large-scale *Befreit*, but the song has all its power in her performance. —P.L.M.

well worth saving for my music reference library, and those of the past two years have been too large for the shelves of my bookcase. Esthetics be damned—I want the ARG where I can get at it.

D. R. DICKSON
Philadelphia

It perhaps sounds silly, but the old style was much easier to file for reference. The longer, thinner style always seems to get mixed up with other publications and several ARGs have been lost that way.

HOWARD H. HIGGINS
Springfield, Mass.

I was never satisfied with the large-page format. So get back to the smaller, more convenient, one just as soon as you can, please.

JOHN J. C. SHELLY
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Please return to the old size in September. The copies fit much better into a lady's handbag.

NATALIA J. JANICKI, M.D.
Eloise, Mich.

I'm afraid I, too, will have to be numbered among your readers who do not approve of the recent change of page size. In fact, I deliberated some time before renewing my subscription simply because of this. I happen to be one who likes to save the issues and bind them, and the new size does not lend itself to this treatment very well. Furthermore, my issues come to me quite often badly damaged by the mails.

DAVID P. DEMAREST
Tenafly, N. J.

The new large-page format has never pleased me and just last week I decided to let my subscription expire for this reason. That decision still stands but you may be sure that if I hear the ARG is going back to the old size, I will renew my subscription . . . See you again in September?

WILFRED A. BURGDORF
St. Louis

I would vote in favor of returning to the old size.

R. K. SHAFFER
Harrisburg, Pa.

I must say that I preferred the smaller size to the ones you have been issuing for the last two years. They could be carried around so much more easily.

HAROLD P. BOCK
Chicago

I'd like to put in my vote for a return to the old, smaller format. The larger one is attractive in many ways and permits a better cover display, which I suppose is important. But the smaller size has for me the overriding advantage of convenience. It can fit in a pocket, and is easier to handle; and best of all, it is much, much simpler to store away for future reference.

LAWRENCE H. ODELL
New York City

I hold that the adoption of the present large format was a most unfortunate decision from every point of view. If the *Guide* is brought back to its former size (and substance) it will not only acquire new friends but also prove more valuable and satisfying to its many old ones.

L. VERONESE
Milan, Italy

When I returned to the States I was surprised, on renewing my subscription, to see the new unwieldy format. What happened to the pocket-size edition I used to carry with me on my calls?

It was good to see Mr. Lyons' comment on the opinions of other subscribers. By all means, let us return to the original format.

HARVEY V. KROLL, M.D.
Detroit

If the additional cost would not be too great, either to you or to the subscriber, I would vote for the old size.

GEORGE F. STAMM
Aurora, Ill.

Certainly hope that the *Guide* will return to the old smaller size. My big problem then will be the disposition of these two years of the larger format. I always had my copies bound annually, but the big ones just will not fit into my bookshelves.

J. W. CARLIER
Jackson, Miss.

Please cast my vote for a return to the "little ole" ARG.

JOHN W. WILLS
Wilmington, Del.

FROM THE MINORITY:

We much prefer the new larger format.

FRANCES RHOADS
Wilmington, Del.

I cannot say that I have strong feelings about it, but I do favor the present size of your magazine.

ROY HOLLAND
Anthony, Kan.

My preference is decidedly for continuation of the present size.

C. F. WEILER
Milwaukee

Today I received my June issue of the *Guide*. Everything was fine until I reached the last page. Then I was struck dumb with horror. I cannot protest strongly enough against any move to the old format. Why in the world would anyone desire to carry his copy in his pocket anyway? Frantically, I beseech you—don't change! The old format was terribly unhandy. It was ugly, unwieldy, and generally undesirable. On the other hand, your present style is wonderful. You might ask why I haven't written before and told you this. Simply because people don't do things like that. I must point out that the great majority

of letters to any business concern after a change are from those who are dissatisfied.

This is human nature. The dissatisfied (probably natural-born gourmets anyway) write and the satisfied do not. Reckon on this when considering your hundreds of letters. They do not represent at all the feelings of your readers. Furthermore, the request for subscribers' views will not give you an accurate sampling. The dissatisfied . . . will be more eager to reply than those who are happy with the present format. Mark my words. If you change . . . you will have aroused the former happy ones and turned them into dissatisfied subscribers. You will be buried in a torrent of mail. I have used pleas, logic, and threats. I return to please. For heaven's sake—don't change!

T. W. FAULKNER
Little Rock

My vote goes towards keeping it the same size. I find this best for storing, and I like to keep all back numbers for ready reference.

ARLINE WIGDAL
Escondido, Calif.

I am very much in favor of retaining your present large format.

H. V. MENKING
Louisville, Ky.

I sincerely hope that you do not return to the old, small-size format. It was extremely difficult to care for back issues. No inexpensive binder was available; it was the wrong size for any standard punch; and, because thicker, it was more difficult to punch, anyway. In the present size, it is easy to punch and file in a standard binder, and therefore more usable.

EARLE C. ENHOLM
Anaheim, Calif.

As for the format of your review, I preferred the smaller one, but since you have adopted another I do not quite see the point of changing again.

REV. RENE GIRARD
Dolbeau, Quebec

I am for keeping the *Guide* in its present form. I like the large-page format.

J. MARK COLE
River Rouge, Mich.

Keep the present size. It's easier to read.

KENNETH KAYE
Brooklyn

Why should one want to carry it in a pocket? Should it not be considered in the quiet of one's home?

HARRISON M. BATTEEN
Midwest City, Okla.

No! Don't change the format. The present size is perfect for filing in loose-leaf folders.

W. J. HICKS
St. Louis

I'm very happy with the new (present) size and see no point in your changing back.

ROBERT W. DONSELMAN
San Diego

"Unlikely Corners"

WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners...

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

RCA VICTOR has finally justified its recent series of girl albums, most of which have mystified me as to *raison d'être*. A couple of exceptions were the Lee Wiley and Connee Boswell sets; now comes the finest of all: **Diahann Carroll Sings Harold Arlen Songs** (LPM-1467), wherein the material and the presentation approach art.

Harold Arlen is unquestionably the finest composer writing songs today. I agree with Douglas Watt, who supplies the liner notes for the album, when he says that "...I cannot think of one cheaply made Arlen song. With each new score, he seems to be trying to exceed himself."

But I cannot agree with Watt when he says in addition: "Perhaps this is because he has never quite attained the personal recognition that some of his colleagues have and, consequently, feels a need to struggle all the harder in his creative work." It is true that Harold Arlen's name is not so well known as some others', but his songs are known. And Arlen's work is not of the calibre that it is because he would like to be better known, but because he is a real artist, and a serious one, who labors carefully over each song. When he refers to the act of creation as "a searching", as "experiment", Arlen is expressing a credo which results in superlative compositions because he is concerned with self-expression and not with expression of self. Because he is truly gifted, he spends no time struggling for fame; he is too busy composing.

Miss Carroll made her Broadway debut in the Harold Arlen musical, "House of Flowers", from which she sings *A Sleeping Bee*. This beautifully created song (with lyrics by Truman Capote and Arlen) is beautifully re-created by Miss Carroll who, indeed, sings it better than she did in the original show. (anyone who missed the original cast album is urged to explore the musical beauties of this work on Columbia ML-4969; without a doubt this was the best musical score of the 1954 season: pay special attention to *I Never Has Seen Snow, Don't Like Goodbyes*, and the title song. There are riches here).

For many years Arlen lived in limbo—Hollywood, that is—where he enjoyed anonymity and steady work supplying the studios with songs and scores. Actually seven of the dozen songs in Miss Carroll's album were heard originally in

films. The most obvious is the Academy Award-winning *Over The Rainbow* from "The Wizard of Oz", enchantingly sung here. (The sound track of this quite historic film has recently been made available



...unquestionably the finest

able on M-G-M E-3464; it is still a fresh, delightful, and truly "composed" score). Other movie songs are *It's Only A Paper Moon*, *What's Good About Goodbye?* (One of Miss Carroll's best interpretations), *My Shining Hour*, *Hit The Road To Dreamland*, *Out Of This World*, and *Let's Take The Long Way Home*.

From a neglected Broadway musical, "St. Louis Woman", Miss Carroll sings *Come Rain or Come Shine* and the art song, *I Wonder What Became of Me?*, both vibrantly and affectingly. (Run to your record dealer and try to get a copy of the Capitol original cast album, a practically out-of-print ten-inch, L-355. This is a remarkably well made transfer, from 78 rpm, of a richly moving score). From an even earlier Arlen musical, "Life Begins at 8:40", Miss Carroll sings the rhythmic Ira Gershwin-E.Y. Harburg lyric, *You're A Builder-Upper*; and from another musical (for which Harburg fashioned the lyrics), "Hooray For What", comes *Down With Love*.

It is obvious from the foregoing that among other Arlen qualities, versatility is an important one. Too often the composer is thought of only as a composer of blues. This began with his Cotton Club

days in the thirties when he wrote such songs as *I Gotta Right to Sing The Blues*, *Stormy Weather*, *Ill Wind*, and others, including *Blues In The Night* for a film. The songs as presented by Miss Carroll easily make the point of Arlen's many-sided musical personality.

To round out the discographical side of this Arlen appreciation, it may be remarked that Arlen is a *performer* of his songs also. In fact, he was a singer before he became a composer. Victor once released an album or reissues called *Composers at Play* (LVA-1003) in which Arlen sings six of his songs composed up to 1934 (as a bonus, the reverse side has Cole Porter singing and playing six of his songs). A dozen songs, mainly the standards—*One For My Baby*, *That Old Black Magic*, *I've Got The World On a String*, etc.—are presented in Capitol's *Harold Arlen and His Songs* (T-635) sung by the composer. And Walden Records, in *The Music of Harold Arlen*, ambitiously surveyed the composer's output in a two-record set (Walden 306/7), featuring mainly the lesser known songs, a dozen of which are performed by the composer himself.

Harold Arlen need not, in fact does not, try "to exceed himself". He needs only to maintain the high quality he first displayed when, in 1930, his first song for a musical, *Get Happy*, was a hit. Currently deep in the work of a forthcoming show, "Jamaica", and awaiting production of the magnificent "Blues Opera", Harold Arlen could easily take time out to rest upon the accomplishments of the past. But he won't, for he must continue his searching and experimenting and thus enriching the store of American song.

Diahann Carroll, who really started all this—with an assist from the opinionated Mr. Watt—in her first full-scale album immediately establishes herself as an important artist. She sings with fine control and beautiful tone without neglecting the meaning of the lyrics. She projects with complete professional assurance, handling both rhythm numbers and ballads with charm and musical poise. She has style, but no affectation. Obviously Miss Carroll is a major young talent; we will hear more from and about her. It is, incidentally, refreshing to hear a young singer who respects her material in addition to understanding its musical values.

Happily the accompaniment by Ralph Burns and his orchestra is right also for Miss Carroll and the Arlen music. The arrangements are apposite also (no credits are given to the arrangers, one of whom was probably Burns himself) and do not distort the songs or interfere with the vocalist. The recorded sound belongs with RCA's best. In all, a fine tribute to a fine composer, whose impressive catalogue has only begun to be explored by the record companies. —E.J.

MISCELLANY:

The Wraggle Taggle Gipsies: *The Wraggle Taggle Gipsies; Lord Rendell; Wolsey's Wilde (Byrd); Sweet Jane; The Frog and the Mouse; The Seeds of Love; Fantasia on Polly Oliver and Gathering Peas (arr. S. Taylor); Flowers in the Valley; Near London Town; O Who's going to show your pretty little foot?; Consorts from the Dolmetsch Collection; Blow away the morning dew; Searching for lambs; Linden Lea (Vaughan Williams, arr. Taylor); Sweet England; Dabbling in the Dew; Strawberry Fair; Robin (Mundy); Just as the tide was flowing; Alfred Deller (counter-tenor); Desmond Dupré (lute and guitar); The Taylor Recorder Consort. Vanguard VRS-1001, \$4.98.*

▲HERE are some of the loveliest and most striking of English folk songs, done in Deller's well-known and individual style. For variety, there is an occasional instrumental number, played by a group of recorders, but the show is definitely Deller's. Little exception can be taken to the singer's delivery of either the text or the music. Everything is crystal-clear and infallibly musical. But it is not inconceivable that some listeners may find themselves wishing for a heavier, more vociferous voice before the concert is ended. To be sure, most of the songs are gentle in character; even so, one could use more variety. —P.L.M.

Operatic Highlights for Orchestra, Vol. IV — "Le Maschere" — Overture (Mascagni); "Guglielmo Ratcliff" — Intermezzo (Il Sogno) (Mascagni); "Suor Angelica" — Intermezzo (Puccini); "La Wally" — Prelude to Act 4 (Catalani); "Il Signor Bruschino" — Overture (Rossini); "Luisa Miller" — Overture (Verdi); "Norma" — Overture (Bellini); "Linda di Chamonix" — Overture (Donizetti); Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. London LL-1600, \$3.98.

▲TITLES such as the one encompassing this release may sometimes be a little misleading, for these are not the standard, "favorite" orchestral excerpts from opera (those were disposed of in the earlier volumes of this series). Rather, we have a most interesting assortment of unusual and for the most part seldom heard selections. Most of these pieces, in fact, owe whatever familiarity they may have to

MEMO TO COLLECTORS: Effective with the September issue, we will once again accept classified buy, sell, or swap notices of any length at ten cents a word. Count every catalogue number, including label symbol and prefix, as a word unit.

the phonograph; with the single exception of the Donizetti Overture to "Linda di Chamonix" they have all been recorded previously, but mainly on 78 rpm. This, therefore, is the only modern recording to present so comprehensive a sampling of more or less obscure Italian opera repertory. Gianandrea Gavazzeni, according to the notes on the jacket, has conducted at most of the leading houses of Italy and is also well known as a composer and critic. His performances here have considerable vitality and, where required, sensitivity. All told, this collection will hold genuine interest for the opera enthusiast. —I.K.

Cello Recital by Ludwig Hoelscher with

Michael Raucheisen (piano): *Introduction and Polonaise in C, Op. 3* (Chopin); *Après un rêve* (Fauré); *Adagio con variazioni* (Respighi); *Silent Woods, Op. 68, No. 5 and Rondo in G minor, Op. 94* (Dvořák); *Sarabande in E* (Gaillard); *Les Cherubins* (Couperin); *Toccata in D* (Frescobaldi). London Telefunken LGX-66061, \$2.49.

▲THESE performances are reasonably musical, but their overall spirit is more dogged than subtle. Apparently well known in Germany, Hoelscher has a tone that verges on nasal harshness in the high register, and he treats the Fauré, among others, with a rather heavy hand. However, the Chopin and Dvořák's *Silent Woods* come off fairly well, and it is perhaps no coincidence that these, with the *G minor Rondo*, are among the most substantial works on the record. The Frescobaldi, of course, is transcribed from organ, and with surprising adaptability. —S.F.

House of the Lord: The Lord's Prayer (Malotte); *Hospodi pomilui* (Lovsky); *Eili, Eili* (arr. Wagner and Chaloř); *Enit, enite* (arr. Des's); *A mighty fortress is our God* (Luther); *Panis angelicus* (Franck); *Kol Nidrei* (arr. Wagner and Chaloř); *Were you there?* (arr. Wagner and Terri); *Ave Maria* (Schubert); *Oh God, our help in ages past* (Croft); *Tu es petrus* (Palestrina); *Prayer of Thanksgiving* (arr. Wagner); Roger Wagner Chorale, with Salli Terri, Canton Allen Michelson and Paul Salamunovich, soloists, conducted by Roger Wagner. Capitol P-8353, \$3.98.

▲HERE is a meeting of the faiths in music. It is frankly a popular program—both in selection and presentation—with only the Palestrina adding a more serious touch. Some of it, such as the intense performance of *Were you there?* and the Schubert *Ave Maria* with the uncomfortably fitted Latin words, is almost too much. The hymn tunes, however, have a certain earnest impressiveness. But the contents really are too all-inclusive to be very satisfying for anybody. —P.L.M.



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